



## HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

### Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX) Homeland Security Committee

*Worldwide Threats to the Homeland: ISIS and the New Wave of Terror*  
*July 14, 2016*

Remarks as Prepared

Before I begin today's hearing I would like to take a moment to remember the Dallas police officers who lost their lives in the line of duty last week. We will never forget.

The tragedy reminds us that every day our first responders take risks to protect us, and we can honor their sacrifice by showing that we support them and that we have their backs.

The past month we witnessed four major terrorist attacks, in four weeks, in four countries, including the deadliest terrorist attack on the U.S. homeland since 9/11.

All of these attacks are believed to be the work of ISIS, the new standard-bearer of evil. In fact, the group has now been linked to almost 100 plots against the West since 2014—an unprecedented wave of terror.

Nearly 15 years after 9/11, we must confront the reality that we are not winning the war against Islamist terror.

While groups like ISIS may be losing some ground in Syria and Iraq, overall they are not “on the run,” as the Obama Administration says. They are on the rise.

But I am concerned that we have only seen the tip of the iceberg.

Director Comey, you prophetically warned this Committee two years ago that there would eventually be a “terrorist diaspora” out of Syria and Iraq, with jihadists returning home to spread extremism.

The exodus has now begun. Thousands of Western foreign fighters have departed the conflict zone, including operatives who are being sent to conduct attacks, as we saw in Paris and Brussels. At the same time, ISIS' online recruiting has evolved, and they now micro-target followers by language and country.

Although our nation is shielded by two oceans, geography alone cannot protect us from this mortal threat.

The statistics speak for themselves. In the past two years, federal authorities have arrested more than 90 ISIS supporters here in our country, and in 2015 we saw more homegrown jihadist plots than we have ever tracked in a single year.

I commend your agencies for stopping dozens of potential tragedies, but too many have already slipped through the cracks. And we know that more plots are in the pipeline.

In the wake of Orlando, Americans are demanding to know how we got to this point, and a clear majority of them say Washington is not doing enough to roll back the threat.

They are stunned by the political correctness here in our nation's capital, especially the refusal to call the threat what it is. We must define the threat in order to defeat it—just as we did with communism and fascism.

We cannot hide the truth, and we cannot redact it from reality. So let's be frank about the enemy: we are fighting radical Islamists.

These fanatics have perverted a major religion into a license to kill and brutalize. And while their beliefs do not represent the views of a majority of Muslims, they represent a dangerous global movement bent on conquering and subjugating others under their oppressive rule.

Sadly, we have failed to commit the resources needed to win. I was recently on the USS Truman aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf, where our sailors are launching sorties to destroy ISIS positions. While I am proud of their efforts, I am not encouraged by our progress.

Last month, even CIA Director John Brennan gave the Administration a failing grade in the fight and said that, quote, "our efforts have not reduced the group's terrorism capability and global reach."

The President is sticking to a "drip, drip" strategy that is better suited for losing a war than winning one. And each day we stick with half-measures, ISIS is able to dig in further and advance a murderous agenda across the globe. Another day to plot, another day to kill.

The violence is becoming so frequent that we now simply refer to jihadist attacks by the name of the city in which they were perpetrated: Paris. Chattanooga. San Bernardino. Brussels. Orlando. Istanbul.

How many more will be added to the list before we get serious about taking the fight to the enemy?

This is the greatest threat of our time, and I urge each of you today to explain to this Committee—and to the American people—how you are planning to elevate our defenses to keep Americans safe.

###